

Schools short of goals

Both local districts looking to improve

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Neither Frankfort Independent nor Franklin County public school districts met national yearly progress goals this year, falling short in math and reading with their black, free and reduced-lunch and disability student populations.

The Kentucky Department of Education released the results Tuesday.

However, Frankfort Independent Schools Superintendent Judith Lucarelli said that does not mean the schools are failing. She said it is "one diagnosis on one day," similar to a person's blood pressure and temperature.

"When you go to the doctor's office, the first thing he does is take your blood pressure and temperature," Lucarelli said. "If you have a high temperature, he does not send you to the hospital, he says, 'We need more information.' Math and reading (scores) are blood pressure and temperature. There is a whole lot of other stuff that we have to know and a whole lot of other stuff we need to do."

Frankfort Independent Schools met 11 of 13 No Child Left Behind "adequate yearly progress" goals. See **SCHOOLS**. A2

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which measure the performance of sub groups such as white, Hispanic, black, free and reduced-lunch and students with disabilities. The measurements were based on children's scores in math and reading on the Kentucky Core Content Tests. The progress of each subgroup is monitored from year to year to make sure those students do not fall behind.

Franklin County public schools met 11 of 16 goals as a district.

Frankfort met all of the goals last year. This year, none of the black students tested proficient in math and only 5.88 percent of low-income students tested proficient at Frankfort High School, Lucarelli said. Since Frankfort High School was not proficient, the district was not proficient.

Math is an issue the district plans to begin targeting aggressively, Lucarelli said. It plans to do a curriculum realignment this summer, the high school already ordered new math materials and Second Street School Middle Grades Principal Cynthia Lawson, a former math teacher, will convene a committee to begin determining how to better teach math.

"Math has definitely been a concern in the district for a while," Lucarelli said.

Second Street targeted math through an "academic fitness program," where teachers test students the week before each school break. Those who do not score proficiently are invited to "math school" for the first week of each break.

The high school does not have a similar program, Lucarelli said.

was proficient in math. Bondurant's free and reduced population struggled in reading.

At Elkhorn Middle School, the black and low-income populations were not proficient in math and the free and reduced population struggled in reading.

At the district level, the disability population also was not proficient in reading and math.

"We knew we had problems in those areas," Dominick said. "We are trying to do a better job identifying those populations and designing instruction to meet their needs."

The district uses "thoughtful education," Dominick said. Different students learn in different ways, whether it is visually, orally or by another method. Thoughtful education helps teachers plan their

lessons to reach all different kids of learners.

More than 800 schools statewide met their yearly progress goals for the 2004-2005 school year.

"Having close to 75 percent of the schools in our state making AYP is very good news," Lisa Gross, a department spokeswoman, said.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, states are required to report how schools and districts are faring, with a goal of 100 percent proficiency by 2014. Schools that fail to meet their yearly progress goals for two or more years in a row, and are funded by money from the federal Title I program, are subject to consequences. The Title I money goes to schools to help disadvantaged pupils.

There are four tiers which failing schools can fall into depending on the number of consecutive years in which they have not met all of their AYP goals.

First tier schools have fallen short of their goals for two consecutive years, Tier 2 schools failed three years in a row and schools in the third tier missed for consecutive years. Schools in the fourth tier missed five straight years.

Penalties range from officials having to notify parents and allowing pupils to transfer schools to having to write a plan for alternative school governance.

According to the latest data, there were 868 schools that met each of their AYP goals, and 304 schools that did not. Out of 176 school districts, 141 reached at least 80 percent of their goals.

After the full Commonwealth Accountability Testing System results come back, the district will look specifically at what areas of math need to be stronger such as geometry, measurement and computation, Lucarelli said.

It also will continue its push for reading so that its scores there do not fall during the increased focus on math, Lucarelli said.

Franklin County also met adequate yearly progress last year, with Bridgeport Elementary and Franklin County High School individually not meeting their goals.

Franklin County High School fell behind because of its graduation rate, but met it this year, said Wayne Dominick, communications coordinator. Staff began working with freshmen, monitoring them to make sure they do not fall behind.

"I think we will see the results as time goes on," Dominick said.

Bridgeport had some "literacy issues" to work on and has since raised its scores so that more students are proficient, Dominick said.

However, Peaks Mill Elementary and Elkhorn and Bondurant middle schools, all of which were proficient last year, caused the district's rating to fall.

Peaks Mill met eight of nine indicators because not enough of its free and reduced-lunch population